

Percentage of Population Below the Poverty Level

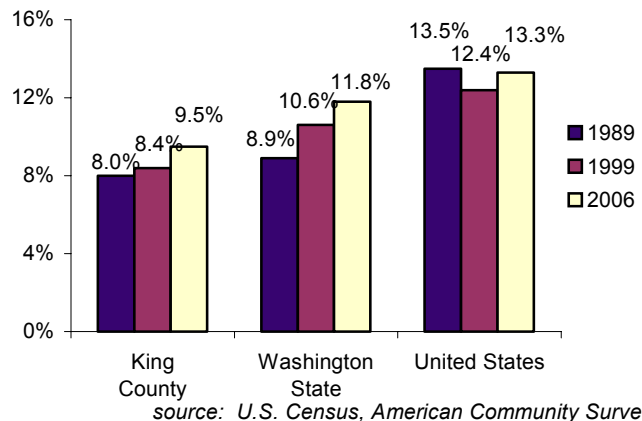
OUTCOME: INCREASE INCOME AND REDUCE POVERTY

Countywide Planning Policy Rationale

"An important component of achieving economic development is through...the empowerment of economically disadvantaged citizens and neighborhoods...." (CPP FW-35) "Jurisdictions shall develop strategies and support community-based actions to involve minorities, women and economically disadvantaged individuals in improving their economic future" (CPP ED-12).

Figure 3.1

Percent of Persons Below the Poverty Level			
	King County	Washington State	United States
1989	8.0%	8.9%	13.5%
1999	8.4%	10.6%	12.4%
2000	8.9%	11.6%	11.6%
2001	8.9%	10.8%	12.1%
2002	9.2%	11.4%	12.4%
2003	7.3%	11.0%	12.7%
2004	10.4%	13.0%	13.1%
2005	9.5%	11.9%	13.3%
2006*	9.5%	11.8%	13.3%



*The 2006 American Community Survey included Group Quarters. Comparison to 2000-2005 ACS data should be made with caution, as prior years did not include Group Quarters. With the addition of Group Quarters, the 2006 poverty rate may be slightly higher than anticipated.

The U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey (ACS) base poverty on dollar value thresholds by family size and composition. In 2006, the ACS established that a family of four with two related children under 18 years of age lived in poverty if its annual income was under \$20,393. An individual under 65 years of age with an income below \$10,462 was considered to be living in poverty. These thresholds are set nationally and do not account for local cost of living differences.

With 11.8% of the population living in poverty in 2006, Washington State's poverty rate ranked 32nd in the nation. Mississippi's poverty rate ranked the highest at 21.1%. Maryland's poverty rate was the lowest in the nation at 7.8% of that state's population. Within the four-county Puget Sound region, the poverty rate varied from 7.6% in Snohomish County to 11.5% in Pierce County.

Figure 3.2

2006 Poverty Rate by Population*				
	White/ Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic
Population**	1,246,177	102,490	236,860	129,138
Population below poverty level	86,958	29,809	21,296	18,787
Male	41,933	14,764	10,288	9,186
Female	45,025	15,045	11,008	9,601
Poverty Rate	7.0%	29.1%	9.0%	14.5%

source: American Community Survey

*due to small sample size, no data is available for poverty rates of American Indian/ Native Alaska or Native Hawaiian/ other Pacific Islander populations. **includes the population for whom poverty status was identified by ACS.

While King County's poverty rate has increased since 1999, it has not impacted King County's population equally. Though poverty rates for the Asian, White (Not Hispanic or Latino), and Hispanic/ Latino populations have decreased, the rate of Black/ African American individuals has grown markedly. In 1999, 20% of the Black/ African American population in King County was identified as living under the poverty rate. By 2006, the poverty rate for this population had increased to almost 30%.